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Biden Marks Beginning of National Crime Victims' Rights Week

Attorney General's office has awarded victims nearly \$10 million in compensation over the past three years; Two employees honored for service to victims

Wilmington – At the start of National Crime Victims' Rights Week on Monday, Delaware Attorney General Beau Biden congratulated two Department of Justice employees for their dedication to helping victims and highlighted the success of his office's program that compensates victims for a wide variety of services they need in the aftermath of a crime.

Mariann Kenville-Moore, director of the Attorney General's Victim & Witness Services Unit, and Evelyn Smith, a lead social worker in the Unit's New Castle County office, received the Delaware Victims' Rights Task Force's 2012 Outstanding Professional Award in recognition of their service and commitment to victims of crime. Kenville-Moore and Smith are career social workers who handle the most serious criminal cases involving violent crimes, including homicides, rapes, and assaults. Kenville-Moore leads a staff of more than 30 social workers and support staff who are focused solely on ensuring that victims receive support and services. They help victims navigate the criminal justice system and make sure they are notified of developments in their cases so that they can participate fully in the prosecution of perpetrators.

"Mariann and Evelyn have dedicated their careers to making sure victims' voices are heard," Attorney General Biden said. "Every day they stand should to shoulder with victims as they work to recover from devastating crimes. I am incredibly proud of the work they do."

Biden also highlighted the successes of the Victims' Compensation Assistance Program (VCAP), which his office was given responsibility for in 2009. In the three years since, Biden's office has substantially increased outreach efforts to ensure that victims are aware of the program and receive the help they deserve.

Although VCAP received only 689 applications for assistance in FY2009, that number jumped to 1,271 applications in FY 2011. VCAP awarded nearly \$3.3 million in FY2010 and \$3.2 million in FY2011, and it is projected that by the time FY2012 ends on July 1, VCAP will have directed an additional \$3.4 million to victims. The Program is funded mainly through surcharges on court fines and penalties, and pays victims' expenses such as mental health counseling, medical bills, lost wages, and moving and relocating services for victims of domestic violence.

"VCAP funds are a lifeline to victims, ensuring that they receive the help they need and deserve to rebuild their lives," said Biden.

Attorney General Biden will speak this Wednesday in Dover at the 21st annual Crime Victims' tribute.

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